

CHARIVARIA.

We are afraid that Mr. VICTOR GRAYSON is about to lose one of his supporters for a time. "At the Empire Theatre, Belfast, on Monday night," we read, "a man hurled a bottle at JOE MAC, the well-known Irish comedian. The police arrested a young man in the audience." We must confess, however, that the forbearance of the public in the presence of music-hall comedians has hitherto been wonderful.

A French Admiral has expressed the opinion that, in constructing *The Dreadnought*, we have made a great mistake. Still, we shall have the satisfaction of having misled our rivals, all of whom are busy copying her.

In his report on the Waleswood accident on the Great Central Railway Lieutenant DONOP states that it originated in the loss of a spring from a goods wagon, and advocates that the arrangement of such springs should be altered so as to bring them into accordance with modern requirements. It reads rather like a Weather Report for 1907.

An ill-tempered old gentleman was watching the Diabolo players in Kensington Gardens. "And to think," he mused aloud, "that a month or so ago this sort of thing was only being done in our asylums!"

The advent is chronicled of a new disease called "Diabolo Neck." Unlike "The Cheek of the Devil," which is an old-established complaint, it induces a lowly attitude in the sufferer.

We are informed that the title of MR. MAURICE HEWLETT's new work, *The Stooping Lady*, was decided on long before the arrival of the Diabolo craze. We think it only fair to warn the public that the book is not, in the fullest sense, a romance of to-day.

King LEWANIA of Barotseland has presented a tame hippopotamus to Lord SELBORNE, and Society ladies, who are fond of going to

extremes, are said to be thinking of taking up the new beastie in the place of the little toy dogs which have been the vogue for so long.

The Hammersmith Socialists have expressed a wish to meet Sir WILLIAM BULL in public debate. The event should prove exciting, for the effect of a red rag on a Bull is well known.

A leading London tailor has informed the representative of one of our daily papers that the climax has been reached in man's dress, and that no radical change will be made



Clergyman (by way of consoling despondent parishioner). "JUST CONSIDER HOW YOU HAVE BEEN GUIDED AND PROVIDED FOR ALL THESE SEVENTY YEARS."

Parishioner. "SIXTY-NINE, IF YOU PLEASE!"

for centuries. It is appalling to think that we are now as beautiful as we ever shall be.

It is sometimes said that we English take our pleasures sadly. Our amusement caterers evidently think so. A feature of the Mammoth Fun City at Olympia is to be a competition between Fasting Men.

"Many authors," says MR. FISHER UNWIN in some remarks on his first "First Novel" Competition, "failed to distinguish between the novel proper and the newspaper serial." Nothing is here said of the novel improper.

"I am happy to say," remarked

MR. WALLACE, K.C., at the opening of Clerkenwell Sessions, "that there has been a diminution in crime. Some 20,000 fewer persons were sent to prison in the last twelve months than in the previous year." The improvement may, of course, be due to a diminution in the vigilance of the Police; but the Bench knows how to take care of itself, and never encourages this theory.

From time to time proposals are made with a view to reforming the method of administering the oath in our Courts of Law. At present a very ancient and dirty Testament is nearly always used, and it is now suggested that the words of the oath shall anyhow be altered to:—"May I perish of some infectious disease caught from this book if I do not speak the truth."

The statement that the infant Prince of ASTURIAS is not to accompany his parents on their visit to England has caused the keenest disappointment at Kensington Palace, where great preparations for his reception were being made. If possible a meeting with *Peter Pan* was to have been arranged.

A curious rumour is afloat as to the disaster to the *Nulli Secundus*. It is said to have been an attempt at suicide. Hearing that its achievements had been surpassed by Continental rivals our airship suddenly remembered that it could be second to none.

A statement in the Police Report which has just been issued to the effect that the Finger Prints System continues to give "unqualified satisfaction" is stigmatised as a barefaced lie by a correspondent who sends us a somewhat illiterate letter from the New Cut.

Our Home-bred Athletes.

"Should the final arrangements be satisfactorily arranged, the struggle between Hackenschmidt, Padouby and Zbysco would be one of the greatest events in the annals of British sport."—*Daily Mail*.

TRUE British sport, indeed, with a Scotchman, an Irishman, and a Welshman all competing together like this.

THE SERMON OF THE FUTURE.

[According to the *Telegraph's* correspondent, an American clergyman at Tottenville, Staten Island, "despairing of finding a publisher for his novel, entitled *Captain Jack's Club*, which is understood to convey a sound moral lesson or two in 80,000 words, struck upon the desperate device of reading the same to his congregation from his church pulpit. . . . He justifies himself for reading his manuscript in the pulpit on the ground of a dwindling congregation, and he believes that a really good pulpit novel will achieve more success than the average sermon."]

MR. PUNCH thinks this quite possible. In fact, he anticipates that in a very short time this New York method of increasing the popularity of the pulpit will be enthusiastically adopted by fashionable preachers over here. And then the Press comments on Monday mornings will probably be something like the following:—

FATHER STRACHAN AT BARN STREET.

Yesterday morning Father SAVONAROLA STRACHAN delivered the thirty-fifth chapter of his scathing and popular serial, entitled "Babury Cross," which hitherto, owing to the extreme outspokenness of its denunciations of the Smart Set, publishers have been too pusillanimous to undertake. His vivid and caustic description of a typical Society woman motoring to a Bridge party at the Cross in her white-enamelled 90-cockhorse-power auto-mobile, with jingling sets of little jewelled bells loading not only her fingers, but even the divided toes of her open-worked stockings, struck home to the consciences of his hearers, several of whom, on leaving the sacred edifice, anxiously inquired the address of the Bond Street jewellers who supplied these emblems of our social decadence. We understand that the *denouement*, which is said to be most painfully realistic, may be reached in about fifteen weeks.

THRILLING STORY OF MURDER-MYSTERY AT ST. FRIDOLIN'S.

For the last two months the "Church Full" boards have been displayed every Sunday at the doors, from which hundreds have been turned away. The attraction of course has been the Rev. GIRNAN SCUNNER'S extraordinarily powerful detective-novel, *Who Killed Him?* It will be remembered that in the opening sermon the victim was found slain, with his breast pierced by an arrow of peculiar construction, and that suspicion attached in turn to various characters who took prominent parts in the obsequies—especially to one who admitted that he had been actually present when the murder was committed. Yesterday, however, the secret was disclosed to the astonished congregation, who, it seems, were totally unprepared to find that the real criminal was an apparently inoffensive character known

as *Spadger*. The scene in which the clever amateur detective traced the weapons to *Spadger's* possession, and finally forced him to confess that he had done the deed, was not only masterly, but was felt by all to convey a valuable moral lesson beneath its grim realism. The story would make an admirable shilling shocker, and we are surprised to hear that the author has not, as yet, succeeded in finding a publisher.

REMARKABLE DRAMATIC RECITAL AT ST. ARBOGAST'S.

At this church the Rev. Prebendary PLATT-CUMBERBATCH is still making slow but stately progress with his Five-Act Historical Drama in blank verse, *The Fall of Longlegs*. Yesterday he read with his usual elocutionary skill the fifth and final scene of the Third Act,

which produced a deep impression upon all who heard it. The passionate appeals of the orthodox members of *Longlegs'* family to their father and chief, imploring him to perform his devotions, were rendered with an amount of pathos that was almost unendurable. But perhaps the highest point was reached in the long and subtly introspective speech of the hero, giving, in two hundred sonorous Alexandrines, his views (which, it is needless to say, do not represent those of the dramatist) upon the efficacy of prayer. They produced an effect which could only be gauged by the deep sigh of relief that came from the entire congregation as the preacher concluded with "Curtain, my brethren!" We are informed that a terrible Nemesis is to overtake *Longlegs* in the last Act, and that the scene at the foot of the "Grand Staircase leading to the Hall of Judgment," where the catastrophe takes place, is



"AND HERE'S TO THE LINE THAT WE FOLLOW!"

("Drink, puppy, drink.")

From the "Pipley Herald."—"MISS HARKAWAY WAS OUT ON HER NEW HUNDRED-GUINEA HUNTER, 'LIMERICK,' BOUGHT, WE UNDERSTAND, WITH THE PROCEEDS OF A RECENT LITERARY SUCCESS. A BEATEN COMPETITOR INFORMS US THAT THE HORSE, UNLIKE THE WINNING LINE, HAS THE RIGHT NUMBER OF FEET."

exceptionally strong and moving, while it establishes beyond all possibility of doubt the sound moral tone of this truly monumental work. Mr. BEERBOHM TREE and Mr. FREDERICK HARRISON, who have had the privilege of reading advance copies of the script, both speak of it in the warmest terms, and we understand that, but for the fact that it would require a more elaborate mounting than can be afforded by their respective stages, they would have been only too pleased to consider a production.

SINGULAR SUBSTITUTE FOR A PULPIT NOVEL.

There was some natural disappointment at St. Nicasius's last Sunday, when it was announced that the Vicar was prevented by nervous breakdown from proceeding for the present with his charming domestic story of suburban life, *The Courtship of Susan Single*, which has been drawing crowded pews for the past six weeks. The Curate, the Rev. SAMUEL BARLAM,



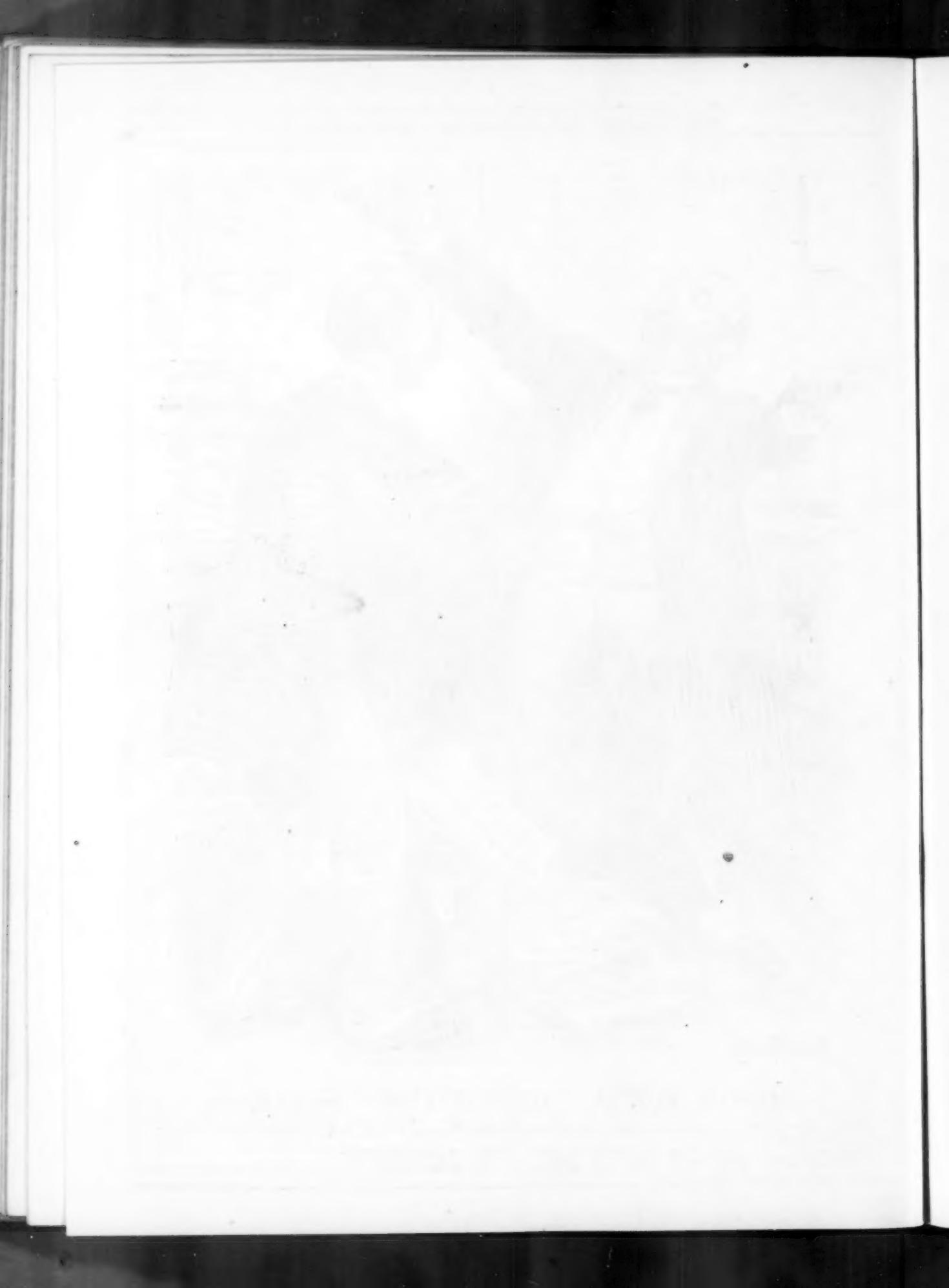
DESIGN FOR A "RECOGNITION" SCENE.

RAILWAY DIRECTOR (*to representative of Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants*). "HAVE YOU THE INTERESTS OF THE PUBLIC AT HEART?"

REPRESENTATIVE OF A. S. R. S. "NO. I'M ONLY LOOKING AFTER MY OWN FRIENDS."

RAILWAY DIRECTOR. "SAME HERE. THEN YOU ARE MY LONG-LOST BROTHER!"

[Fall on one another's necks.]





Occupant of office. "Hi! Hi!! WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING?"
Hand (who has just been paid). "THAT'S ALL RIGHT, GU'NOR. WE'RE LOOKING FOR A TANNER THAT BILL'S DROPPED!"

who broke the sad news, said that, unfortunately, he himself had not the gift of novel-writing, so, with their permission, he would endeavour to intone a series of moral Limericks of his own composition. We understand from members of the congregation who remained to the end of the service that they were agreeably surprised by the literary quality of Mr. BARLAM's Limericks, which, in their opinion, might well be deemed worthy of at least a consolation prize in almost any competition. There is some talk of their being given to the world in the pages of the forthcoming number of the *Parish Magazine*.

F. A.

CAST-UP JETSAM.

"Do yer want a coat, matey?" said a husky voice. "Catch 'old! I've done with it." The working-man stopped in the middle of Victoria Bridge. He looked at the gaunt, unsteady figure, and then at the ragged garment so lavishly offered to him. "I don't want yer coat," he answered gruffly. The man with the coat over his arm looked as if he were going to cry. He had long borne the stoniness of the world (and his own), but that his parting gift should be thrown in his face seemed the unkindest cut of all. The smooth iron parapet is very low, and to sit upon it and throw his legs over took but a moment, and thence he dropped feet foremost into the swift brown tide below. The working-man,

rushing to the side, was just in time to see him disappear beneath the waves. "I didn't want his blooming coat," he explained to the passers-by, "and I don't want to lose a day in no blooming court neither."

There was a shout raised and a whistle blown, which brought a couple of wherries out into midstream. Some hundred yards to the eastward, under the railway bridge, they fished him out; and presently he was lying on his back on the grass slope of the embankment, with a youthful constable standing across him, ostentatiously preparing to produce artificial respiration. But the man suddenly sat up and surveyed the circle of bystanders with unconcealed disgust. The working-man was prominent amongst them, his dislike to assisting the administration of the law not having been strong enough to overcome his curiosity. Just then the second waterman appeared with the dripping coat. The gaze of the limp individual on the grass fell upon his recovered property and upon the intended legatee thereof. The unkindness of the world was still uppermost in his thoughts. "If yer'd only lent a hand with that coat as I arskt yer, matey," he said faintly, "I should 'a' 'ad a dry 'un now, arter my little bit of a swim."

"From Paris Lord and Lady Y—— will proceed to Palermo and thence to Sicily." —*Daily Mail*.

THE crossing from Palermo to Sicily, however, is not recommended at this time of the year.

THE BOWL.

MUM said she thought we were beginning to run wild, so we have had Miss WILLS for two hours every morning. She teaches us all sorts of things—Arithmetic, French, History, Dictation, and Geography. She knows a lot. We like her. She wears her hair flat in front, and is always dressed in dark grey. She is very kind to her mother. Her brother was at Cambridge, and has rowed in a boat-race, and she has promised to make him tell me all about it when he comes home.

Well, on Saturday morning we had been doing English History about KING HENRY THE SECOND, and Miss WILLS read something about a lady called the FAIR ROSAMOND. Then she stopped and said it was time for arithmetic. We could go on with the history next week. After she had gone NINA got hold of the history book, and read in it for a bit. Then her eyes got bright, as they do when she thinks of a game, and she said, "This afternoon we will act the story of the FAIR ROSAMOND and the poisoned bowl." I said, "Right. Who am I to be?" "You," she said, "shall be the King; but I haven't decided the rest yet. I must see Mrs. AUSTIN." Then we went off to Mrs. AUSTIN in the servants'-hall, and she said, "Mrs. AUSTIN, will you do me a great favour?" "Lord bless you, yes, Miss NINA," said Mrs. AUSTIN, "of course I will." NINA said, "I want you to be FAIR ROSAMOND in our play this afternoon. HERBERT will be KING HENRY THE SECOND, and he will make love to you in the maze, and then I shall come in and offer you your choice of being killed by a dagger or by drinking a bowl of poison. You will drink the poison, Mrs. AUSTIN; but, of course, it will only be water." Mrs. AUSTIN at first said No. She thought she would do much better as QUEEN ELEANOR, and NINA ought to be ROSAMOND; and I thought so too. But NINA came up to me and gave me a dig in the ribs and said in French, so that Mrs. AUSTIN shouldn't understand, "Moi la Reine; non Madame Austin." Then I knew Mrs. AUSTIN would have to be ROSAMOND, because NINA always will be a queen if she gets a chance. At last Mrs. AUSTIN said she'd do it. She said, "One way of dying's as good as another in the end," and she promised NINA to scream very loud when she found the poison working, and to fall down very gracefully. She said, "Mind, I don't hold with kings and their goings-on, but you can have it your own way, Miss NINA." I said, "Fairest ROSAMOND, be not afraid," and Mrs. AUSTIN tried to spank me, but NINA said, "You will have to remember, Mrs. AUSTIN, that he is a king, and that you must restrain yourself in the presence of your monarch." Mrs. AUSTIN said we were too much for her with all our learning. Then she gave us each a bit of cake, and we went away to write out the programme and the tickets.

I forgot to say that Dad and Mum were going off that afternoon to spend the week-end with Uncle Dick and Aunt MARGERY. The station's quite close, so they sent their luggage on, and at three o'clock they walked off to catch the train. As soon as they were gone NINA pinned the programme on the front-door. This is what it said:—

NOTICE.

This afternoon precisely will be performed
The Romantic Drama

of

ROSAMOND, OR THE POISONED BOWL.

By His Majesty's Servants, at The Theatre Royal,
Cupar House, in Twelve Acts and Thirty Tableaux.

CHARACTERS.

King Henry the Second	... Mr. HERBERT BISHOP
Fair Rosamond	... Mrs. AUSTIN
Queen Eleanor	... Miss NINA BISHOP

(By kind permission of Mrs. Austin.)

N.B.—In case of shortness of time there will only be the First and Last Act. All Seats Five Guineas.

NINA said she'd put in that bit about kind permission so as to keep Mrs. AUSTIN in a good temper. She said she had seen something like it in one of Dad's programmes.

We soon got the audience in. There was JIM the stable-boy (he's really a man), and ELIZA the parlour-maid, and ETHEL the kitchenmaid, and TOM the boy who does the boots and knives, and I went and fetched MACBEAN the gardener. We had it in the hall. The first Act was in the Palace, and it was a quarrel between me and QUEEN ELEANOR about me being so much away from home. Mrs. AUSTIN didn't come into it, but she sat with the others and clapped her hands. JIM said afterwards it made him go cold all over to hear how we carried on. At last NINA said, "He thinks to deceive me. No matter, I will set spies upon him. Let him beware of the vengeance of a Queen. That's the end of the first Act," she said; "but we haven't got a curtain." Then she came and sat by Mrs. AUSTIN and asked her to be sure to remember what she'd got to say.

The next Act was the last Act. It was in the maze. Mrs. AUSTIN sat on a sofa, and hummed to herself. I think it was "A Different Girl Again," and I came in very secretly and said, "It is a nightingale. No female voice could sing so sweetly. Nay, it is my beauteous ROSAMOND." Then I said, "Hist!" and Mrs. AUSTIN gave a little cry, and dropped her knitting, and I flew into her arms. I knocked over a table in doing it, but I got there all right. Then we had a lot of silly talk, and at last I went away, and QUEEN ELEANOR came creeping along with a green silk bed-cover tied round her waist, and a cardboard crown on her head. She had a paper-knife in one hand and a teacup with water in it in the other. She said to Mrs. AUSTIN, "Varlet, thou art discovered. Choose thy death quickly. The Dagger or the Bowl." Mrs. AUSTIN said, "Mercy, your Majesty, mercy," and fell on her knees, and said it was very hard to die so young; but NINA made her drink it off. Then Mrs. AUSTIN rolled her eyes and said in a wild voice she was beginning to ache all over. JIM said, "It's the mushrooms," and then Mrs. AUSTIN gave a loud scream and fell right across the sofa. Just as she did this the audience all got up in a hustle, and the maids threw their aprons over their faces and ran out, and JIM and TOM and MACBEAN got red, and I heard JIM say, "Oh Lor'," and I turned round, and there was Mum standing at the door, and just rolling with laughter. They'd told her at the station the train was half an hour late, and she'd nipped back to get a book she'd forgotten. NINA was fairly beaten that time, and you should have seen Mrs. AUSTIN when Mum said, "Let the guard be summoned to carry this lovely damsel to her last resting-place." Then she laughed again, and gave NINA and me a kiss, and got her book, and went off to the station. She wasn't a bit in a wax.

Paul among the Composers.

FROM an advertisement of the Hendon Choral Society: "The first rehearsal of St. Paul's 'Mendelssohn' will be held on Tuesday."

Elijah's version, however, is the more popular one.

LIMERICK CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I feel I must write and tell you how much I appreciate the absolute integrity with which you conduct your competitions. My opinion is quite impartial, as I have never yet been fortunate enough to win one of the prizes. Still, I am each week impressed more and more by the fairness shown by you in their distribution, and I never lose an opportunity of expressing this opinion to my large circle of friends. You can make what use you please of this letter.

Your sincere admirer,
WINIFRED WHEEDLE.
(MISS)

P.S.—I enclose my last line for this week.

P.P.S.—I have been an enthusiastic subscriber to your paper since its inception.

SIR,—I have no hesitation in condemning your Limerick competition as the most barbaric form of fraudulent lottery ever evolved by the evil ingenuity of the human mind. It is a disgrace to any government, however degenerate, that so scandalous a practice should be tolerated, and I am ashamed to belong to a country where such corruption stalks abroad in the light of day, and finds a welcome in every home.

JOHN J. SAVAGE.

Post-card from same.—Regret in consequence of slight spelling error I did not recognise my name in this week's prize list. Hearty good wishes for the success of your interesting and amusing competition.

J. J. S.

MY DEAR SIR,—You will probably remember meeting me at Sir CHARLES BLANK's on June 17 last. I sat opposite to you at dinner, and we (I think) much enjoyed each other's society. My wife also remembers you well, and with me is most interested in your competitions. By the way I am enclosing our joint effort for this week. If lucky enough to win we have decided to celebrate the event with a dinner at the Savoy, and shall be delighted to welcome you as our most honoured guest.

Yours very sincerely,
FRANK TRYER.

My wife joins me in kindest regards.

"THE feature of the card was the Sherwood Forest Nursery—nomenclature, by the way, which recalls the picturesquely romantic days of Robin Hood."—*Daily Telegraph*.

THESE great sportsmen do think of things.



Restaurant Habitué (complaining of cookery). "WHO THE DEUCE HAVE YOU GOT IN THE KITCHEN?" Waiter. "OFFICIAL RECEIVER, SIR."

The Strenuous Life.

"MR. ROOSEVELT referred in his speech in a matter-of-fact tone (says Laffan) to 'the brief remainder of my term of office.'

"After leaving Cairo his steamer broke down (says Reuter), and had to put into the bank for repairs."—*Daily Mail*.

NEW novel by the authoress of *The Sorrows of Satan—The Delights of Diabolo*.

ACCORDING to *The Daily Express*, a farmer killed a pigeon and found "600 ears of green corn in its crop." A record crop considering what a bad summer it has been.

"The doctor administered an anecdote," said a policeman in giving evidence at Richmond Police Court. He meant emetic."

THE mystified reader is grateful to the kind editor. All is now explained, and HERBERT may return home without fear.

DISTINGUISHED CONVERTS.

A SURGICAL FORECAST.

[The *Daily Chronicle* of the 9th inst. gives an interesting account of a lecture by Dr. BERNARD HOLLANDER, in which that eminent specialist described how a boy of 16, who had been a "liar, thief and bully" and a terror to his family, was trephined, and by this operation not only lost all his bad propensities but acquired higher moral feelings.]

THE transformation of Mr. GURNARD STRAW is now complete. As our readers are doubtless aware, he underwent an operation for trephining at the hands of Sir VICTOR PARSLEY some six weeks ago. On leaving the nursing home last week he at once despatched a long letter to *The Times* in defence of monogamy, and dined off the joint at SIMPSON'S. On the following day he entered into a contract with Mr. CHARLES FROHMAN to write a military drama for Drury Lane in collaboration with Mr. SEYMOUR HICKS and Mr. CECIL RALEIGH. Last Saturday he joined the Army Service League. On Sunday he sang in the choir at the City Temple. On Monday morning he joined the Primrose League, and attended a rabbit-coursing meeting in Yorkshire. Yesterday he was vaccinated and enlisted in the Irish Guards.

The operation successfully performed last week on Mr. ALF ABEL, the famous novelist, by which a considerable portion of his gigantic brain was removed, has already been attended by the most beneficial results. Curiously enough one of the first things he did on regaining full consciousness was to express a violent abhorrence for fiction, the drama, and indeed all forms of literary activity, and to instruct his publisher, Mr. GOETHEMANN, to withdraw all his novels from circulation. As his convalescence advanced he exhibited an extraordinary dislike for publicity, and assaulted Mr. BEGTHWAYT, an interviewer specially sent by *The Daily Talebearer*, with such violence that the unfortunate journalist's life is despaired of. We understand that Mr. ALF ABEL has changed his name to SMITH, and will shortly embark on a voyage to Saghalien, where he intends to reside for the remainder of his life.

Mr. BLENHEIM URCHIN, while abroad, has been received back into the Conservative Party. Addressing (by gramophone) a monster meeting at the Albert Hall he alluded in feeling terms to the services of Sir FREDERICK BEEVES, who had restored his political sanity by the removal of several contorted

convolutions from his brain cavity, and thus relieved the cranial distension from which he had long suffered. The audience were affected to tears when the gramophone went on to inculcate the paramount importance of modesty, self-suppression, and gentleness in any politician who sincerely desired to serve his country faithfully and efficiently. "Be kind, dear boys, and let who will be clever," were the last words of a speech which so moved the audience that restoratives had to be applied to several prominent peers on the platform, while Sir ALEXANDER ALCAND HOOP, the Conservative Whip, had to be removed to St. George's Hospital in violent hysterics.

MR. HECTOR BROWNSON, formerly notorious for his extreme Socialist views, has been completely converted to acquiescence in the existing régime by the surgical method initiated by Dr. BERNARD HOLLANDER. Though still an inmate of St. Thomas's Hospital, Mr. BROWNSON had so far recovered last Friday as to hurl a water-bottle at his quondam colleague Mr. TOM SQUELCH when the latter called to inquire after his progress. We understand that Mr. BROWNSON has indited a series of fulsome eulogies of Lord CROMER, Lord CURZON, and Lord MILNER, and will shortly enter the firm of ROTHSCHILD in a highly confidential capacity.

MR. MAXEY LEON has just started for Potsdam, where he will be the guest of the GERMAN EMPEROR for several days before taking up his residence permanently in Berlin under the name of HERR MAX LOEWE. This somewhat abrupt change is the result of the wonderful surgical skill of Dr. SCHIEMANN, who by the simple process of removing the Teutophobe ganglion from the occiput of the talented publicist has converted him into an ardent and whole-hearted admirer of KAISER WILHELM II. Just before leaving London Mr. LEON sent a handsome donation to the funds of the Cobden Club. He was seen off at Charing Cross by Mr. HAROLD COX, Mr. BIRELL, and Mr. HALDANE, all of whom he affectionately embraced before starting.

Considerable anxiety prevails in imperial and regal circles owing to the strange attitude assumed of late by Mr. HARRY DE QUEx, the illustrious fictionist and traveller. Mr. DE QUEx, who had been suffering from severe neuralgia, recently placed himself in the hands of Sir JOHN SAWYER, who excised portions of the

contents of the gifted author's cerebellum. Since that day Mr. DE QUEx has developed Republican and anti-dynastic tendencies of the most pronounced type. About a fortnight ago he declined a pressing invitation to stay with the TSAR at Peterhof, and has since returned all the decorations, numbering upwards of fifty, which he has received from the various Crowned Heads of the civilised world.

MUSICAL NOTES.

UNDoubtedly the most epoch-making event of this or any autumn season has been the attendance of the "Ail Blacks" at the final rehearsal of the Leeds Festival. Not only did it symbolize that union of music and gymnastics which constituted the Platonic ideal in education, but it stimulated the conductor, choir, and orchestra to unprecedented efforts of virtuosity, although a certain amount of natural disappointment was felt that the renowned Antipodean athletes abstained from giving any demonstration of their prowess in the hall, and were not dressed in their full football kit. Still Sir CHARLES STANFORD has stated to the musical critic of the *Yorkshire Post* that it was the proudest moment of his life. "If only they had kicked the ball into the band," he added, "my joy would have been unalloyed."

The episode, however, has lent impetus to the renascence of British music in a variety of intensely interesting ways. Sir EDWARD ELGAR, who was much affected and impressed by the advent of the New Zealanders, has resolved to commemorate the event in a set of grand symphonic variations, entitled "From the Southern Cross Bar," in which the special characteristics of each of the team will receive appropriate musical illustration; a masterly contrapuntal delineation of the referee being introduced into the Coda, in which full scope will be given to all the instruments of percussion.

The tribute of Mr. BANTOCK, the eminent musical Orientalist, to the redoubtable Colonials is, like all his work, highly original and unconventional. He proposes to treat symphonically, in a triple cantata, the life-history of a Canterbury lamb from its first appearance to the cold-storage stage. Those who have been fortunate enough to see the rough

scenario of this momentous composition confidently declared that it will surpass in monumental grandeur and mellifluous opulence of local colour even the most sublime achievements that have yet emanated from the teeming brain of its phenomenally gifted creator. Mr. BANTOCK, who is his own librettist, conceives the hero in the light of a modern Canterbury pilgrim, unconscious of its doom, gambolling playfully on the enamelled pastures until the very hour of execution. The soprano solo, "Maori had a little lamb," is of bewitching beauty, while the concluding or cold-storage section, which is set in the form of a *moto perpetuo* lasting fifty minutes, is marked by a corrosive charm unique in the annals of the meat-market. Throughout the work there runs, like an *idée fixe*, a haunting phrase assigned to a solo cornet, an instrument whose exquisite bleating *timbre* renders it peculiarly suitable in this context.

Mr. JOSEF HOLBROOKE has also signalled the occasion, in a manner eminently calculated to enhance his high reputation. Taking CHOPIN's famous *étude* on the black notes as the central theme of his work, he has woven it into a marvellously rich and complicated orchestral tapestry along with a number of topical melodies, including "Waltz me round, Willie," "The Leather Bottel"—the nearest approach to a football in musical literature—and "Thou'rt passing hence, my brother." The scoring of the work bids fair to establish a record in sonority, especial prominence being given to a quartet of octofoons. Mr. HOLBROOKE has gone to the Black Forest to give the last touches to his work, which is inscribed to Messrs. MESSENGER and WRIGLEY, two leading members of the New Zealand team, and bears the expressive title "The Scrummage: an Orchestral Footballad."

Next to the visit of the "All Blacks" the most striking feature of the Leeds Festival has been the sensation caused by Mr. BEN DAVIES's wonderfully witty remark to the musical critic of *The Daily Chronicle*. Mr. BEN DAVIES, it should be explained, has lately taken up Diabolo, which he describes as a fine exercise for singers, and on Wednesday morning last he gave an exhibition of his skill before a small gathering of interested friends. "Years ago," observed the talented tenor, "I used



AUSTERE AUNT. "COME, HENRY, SATAN FINDS SOME MISCHIEF STILL FOR IDLE HANDS TO DO."
HENRY (despairingly). "YES, I KNOW. BUT HE'S SUCH A LONG TIME FINDING ANY TO-DAY.
I'M TIRED OF WAITING FOR HIM."

to play 'Fra Diavolo.' Now I play Fra Diabolo." "And you play it like a true *Advocatus Diaboli*," promptly responded the journalist, though with characteristic modesty he has suppressed his sparkling sally. In this context we may note that Sir FREDERICK BRIDGE, famous for his musical antiquarianism, has now conclusively established the fact that TARTINI's famous "Trillo del Diabolo" was inspired by the game and not by the Prince of Darkness.

"Is it necessary to root-prune at all? Some will answer No, and others will just as surely say that unless trees are root-pruned little or no fruit need be expected. Both opinions may be conscientiously and honestly held."—*Daily Telegraph*.

WE have no doubt that Mr. BALFOUR greatly appreciates the loyal support which *The Daily Telegraph* always gives to his views.

Diabolo: Its Effects on the Weather.

It is reported that the popular craze has invaded the Meteorological Department, with the result that cones are being hoisted at signalling stations all round the coast.

A CONTEMPORARY gives a list of the "services" in which the London County Council is engaged. Among them we notice:

"DESTRUCTIVE INSECTS,"
"DROWNED BODIES,"
"ICE CREAMS,"
"DANGEROUS TRADES."

Now we know who puts the "big blue flies in the butchers' shops, and the small ones in the milk, and the arsenic in the ices. It's the L.C.C.

WHY is a spool when it spins?—Because the higher the fewer.



L. RAVENHILL

Goldberg (who has taken a salmon ricer). "YETH, YOU CAN GATCH A SALMON, BUT THEN YOU'VE GOT TO GIVE IT TO YOUR FRIENDS, AN' WITH SALMON AT YOUR SHEELINGS A POUND, IT AIN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME, THAT'S ALL!"

OUR "LAST NOVEL" COMPETITION.

[Two "First Novel" Competitions have been announced recently and are exciting much interest among young authors.]

WE have much pleasure in announcing a "Last Novel" Competition. We feel that in doing so we shall be making a valuable contribution to the solution of a grave problem, and supplying a long-wanted relief.

Conditions.

1. Each manuscript must be accompanied by a sworn declaration that it really is the very last novel the author will write or give his or her name to. Each author must also

undertake not to begin again under another name.

2. Authors not caring to take the trouble of writing a new novel for this competition may send a copy of their last published book. But the declaration above referred to is indispensable.

3. The production of plays at the Lyceum, a reluctance to face the camera, assistance (journalistic or otherwise) at runaway marriages, and the contribution of a serial story or serial stories to the half-penny press, will not be considered disqualifications.

4. Prizes will be awarded in number according to the quantity of authors competing, and in value

according to the benefit resulting to the world at large from their withdrawal from the ranks of literature.

5. Prizes will not actually be handed over to successful competitors, but will be bestowed, at their death, on their heirs or assigns. This rule is necessary in case of a breach of the bond on the part of authors.

6. The Editor's decision shall be final, and the disposal of manuscripts entirely at his mercy.

NEW AIDS TO BEAUTY.

[Professor HARVEY W. WILEY, chemist-in-charge of the U. S. A. Department of Agriculture, in recommending cookery as an exercise, declares that it is as healthful as rowing or golf, and descants upon the beauty of the blush that comes from bending over the stove.]

Toil no more with cleeks and brassies,

Weary lasses;

Toil no more,

O my sisters,

Raising blisters

As you ply the painful oar,

Leave the racket lying idle,

Leave the motor in its shed,

Leave the rein and leave the bridle —

Take to cookery instead.

Trust me, you will find the kitchen Passing rich in

Health and grace;

Roasting, broiling,

Toasting, boiling

Bring the colour to your face.

Sunshine mars the best complexion

With a coarse and freckled tan;

Would you blush in full perfection,

Try, oh, try the frying-pan.

Should you grieve to find your figure Growing bigger

Than it ought,

Blouses splitting,

Nothing fitting,

Hooks refusing to be caught;

Cookly exercise will cure you,

Setting every fault to rights.

Cooks, I scarcely need assure you,

Are invariably sprites.

Would you see your hands grow milky,

Soft and silky,

Scour a pot,

Or a kettle;

Rub the metal

With your soda strong and hot.

Would you have your fingers feeling

Sleek as velvet, pray begin

Instantly potato-peeling —

It is matchless for the skin.

Ready for Anything.

"Comfortable Home for Business Lady; piano; or respectable young man." —*Bolton Evening News*.



LLOYD-GEORGE AND HIS DRAGON.

LLOYD-GEORGE (to Welsh Goat). "BUTT ME NO BUTTS! I'M GOING FOR HIM AS FAST AS I CAN!"

[Welsh Nonconformists are vigorously protesting against further delay in the promised attack upon the Established Church in Wales.]





TRIALS OF AN M. F. H.

M. F. H. (who is out for the first time in a little country he has taken in Ireland). "HOLD HARD, TIM! I THINK THAT HOUND'S GOT A LINE DOWN THE DITCH."

Tim. "OCH! BAD LUCK TO HIM. A DIVIL OF A DOG FOR A RAT HE ALWAYS WAS!"

HOLIDAY ENGAGEMENTS.

["Now that the holidays are drawing to a close the minor jewellers will once more have to consider the question of allowing for engagement rings no longer required."—*Daily Mirror*.]

HARK! I hear the postman ringing, and I know what he is bringing; 'Tis a tiny postal packet which is certain to appear

When the leaves are tumbling downward, and the folk returning townward,

When the holidays are over in the falling of the year.

With a gentle sigh I take it, eye the sealing-wax and break it, And the tenderest of memories within my bosom stir

As I see the well-known token of a troth that's yearly broken In its customary fashion coming back to me from Her.

Little ringlet, I remember how I bought you one September; Brighton beach was warm beneath us, and the sun was hot above; We had met and talked together—it was really ripping weather, And the season when one's fancy simply flies to thoughts of love.

She was fairer than a fairy, and she sweetly blushed, did MARY, When I slipped you on her finger, inexpensive little ring; But with work-a-day October we grew sensible and sober, And the postman brought you back again, long, long before the spring.

Next we met at Inverary—She was JEANIE now, not MARY— She'd a tammy, I remember, and her face was finely tanned; She'd a pretty knack of flushing, and I thought she did the blushing Even better than poor MARY, when I came to ring her hand.

For a month you were to linger, lucky ringlet, on her finger; But with Autumn came the work-time, and the holidays were o'er, So my JEAN went home to Stirling, took to hockey, golf, and curling, And the postman called at Christmas time to leave you at my door.

When I met Her next, I fancy She had changed her name to NANCY; 'Twas at Lynton, I remember; I had run down for a blow;

She had sisters—six or seven—and she simply hated Devon; Till I came there (so she hinted) it was deadly dull and slow.

Well, although she was no beauty, I resolved to do my duty, And we read each other's palms and told our fortunes by the cards; But I did not try to stop her when she thought it only proper To return you in November with her very kind regards.

Next I handed you to FLORRIE—that's the year I went to Corrie; Then I gave you to AMANDA on the breezy pier at Ryde; Then at Scarborough to CARRIE—then to MAUD at Invergarry; Then to NELLIE, when she promised (like the rest) to be my bride.

That was recently at Dover—but the holidays are over, And I'm back to tape and sealing-wax and prosy, humdrum things, So I'll leave you safely sleeping in my Uncle's kindly keeping Till the Summer sets me dreaming once again of love and rings.

FIVE.

I HAVE caught it five times. H'sh, not a word to anybody.

* * * * *

It is a very pretty figure, five. The Romans denoted it by the letter "V," which shows what *they* thought of it. The modern symbol has the merit of being both artistic and distinctive. Turn a six upside down and you have a nine, but a five is always a five. True, if you draw the tag at the top to the west instead of to the east, you have something perilously like a three, but only a fool would be so careless. That, indeed, would seem to be another merit of the five—that it weeds out the fools. A fool might do anything with an eight, and it would still be an eight; unless he put it sideways, when it would become the sign for infinity. But that is Higher Mathematics, and we are not discussing Higher Mathematics just now. We are merely pointing out that I have caught it five times.

* * * * *

People of all classes have had to reckon with the five. Nature (to begin at the top) gave us five fingers on each hand, and five toes on each foot. How absurd we should look with three or eleven or any other number! RICHARD WHITEING wrote No. 5, *John Street*, and RUDYARD KIPLING wrote *The Five Nations*. Ask at *The Times* Book Club for No. 6, *John Street*, and you would surprise them. There is a game called *Fives*, and a French town of the same name (although, of course, they pronounce it differently over there). There was once a comedy called *The Five Gallants*; while in no less a place than Virginia is a town called *Five Forks*. You didn't know that (and neither did I until to-day), but it is there all the same. Suppose it had been called *Four Forks*! Why, it wouldn't have been the same place at all.

I don't know if you would care for any more instances. If so, I could add that the French (again) have an idiomatic phrase, "The five o'clock," and that we, for our part, speak of the "Cinque Ports." But, of course, all I really want to say is that I have caught it five times.

* * * * *

I think five is my favourite number. If I were married I should have five children. That always seems to me the ideal number: three boys and two girls. The boys would go to the three Royal Colleges—Eton, Winchester and Westminster; later on, there would be one each for

Oxford, Cambridge, and the Army. They would be glad, I think, to have two sisters at home to mend their things, and bowl to them. Five children would take some keeping: I should want five thousand a year in order to do it handsomely. No doubt this is never likely to happen save in my imagination; meanwhile it is really a fact that I have caught it five times.

* * * * *

It is strange what an influence the number five has had on my career. On my fifth birthday I was presented with a model milk-cart with a real tap, and it was then odds on my becoming a milkman when I grew up. (As it happens I didn't; but sometimes I fancy that there must be more money in the dairy business.) Afterwards I got a fifth in my Tripes—or should have, if such had been available—and was in love five times. Last year my top score was five, and at the present moment I have about five hundred letters to write. Also, as I should have said before, I have just caught it five times.

* * * * *

(I have caught it five times.) I must hide it in brackets once, so as not to seem to be siding about it. I have caught it five times, and that appears to me to be the right number. Four would be incompetence, six ostentation. There are those, I am told, who have done their thousands. I cannot see much in this. Obviously each catch makes the next one easier. You have your eye in, and can judge the distance better. Thus the eight hundred and eighty-fourth (say) becomes a ridiculous business: a man cannot waste his time over such childishness. There are other things to do. But it is an amusing game. . . . Can I catch it? Certainly. Look—one, two, three, four, five—and so on. Yes, it comes quite easy to me.

* * * * *

Have I ever tried to catch it six times? I will be frank with you. I have. And failed? And failed. There you are then.

Exactly; there you are. Why did I fail? Not because I can't catch the thing, for I have already shown you that I can. Obviously we must look somewhere else for the reason. Six, perhaps, is my unlucky number. I don't think I like six. The name six is unpleasant; and, as I have already pointed out, if you turn it upside down it becomes a nine, which is very muddling.

* * * * *

But five! I like five. It is my favourite number. It is because it

is my favourite number that I am content to have caught it five times. Did I tell you, by the way, that I had caught it five times?

A. A. M.

A VICTORIA PLUM.

IT was the first, the very first plum that had come to the stage of full and splendid plumhood upon that espalier. I watched its growth with an eye that was almost paternal in its pride. It was so large and plump, and the patches of rich red appeared upon it in such a striking way. But it hurts me to recall these things—now.

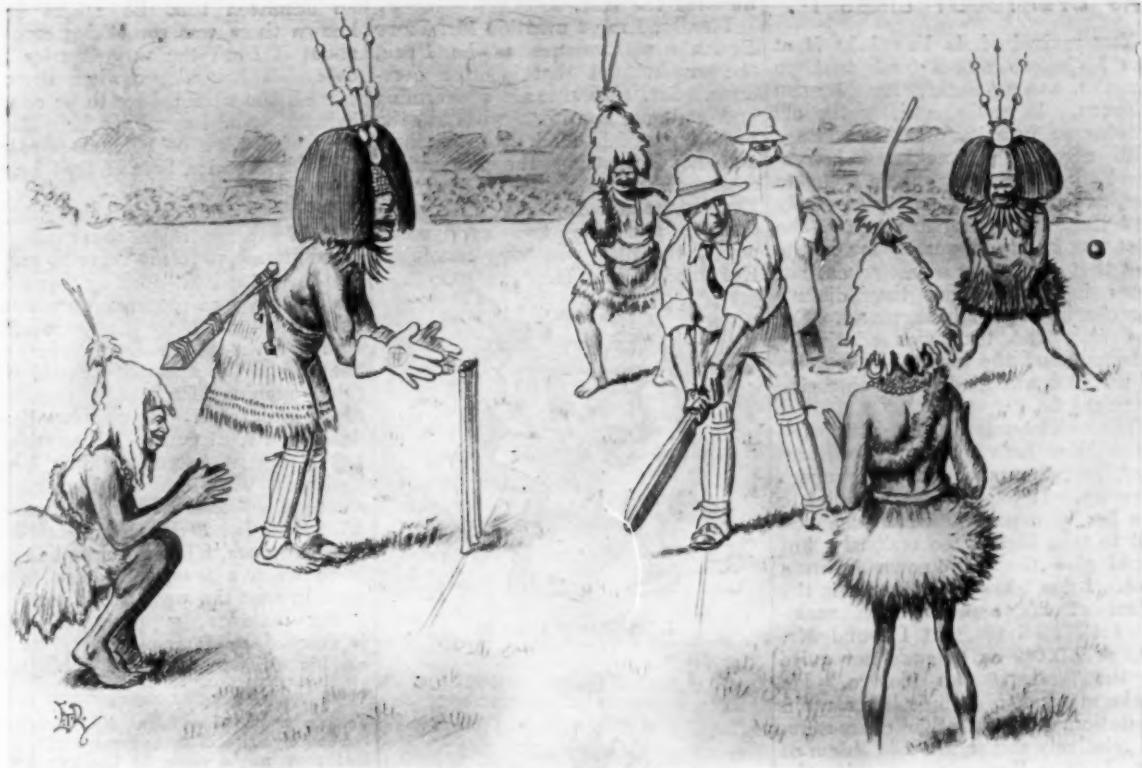
It hung very near the ground, and I took certain precautions for its safety. I seriously annoyed the cat, who had almost brushed against it in the course of an evening prowl, by a furious but futile onslaught upon her; and I had the melancholy satisfaction of chastising the dog for the same offence. I also warned the gardener that, although I did not wish to be offensive in any way, I should not accept his plea of wind or birds if that Plum disappeared suddenly. I dreamed of that Plum of nights, and it was pleasant to think about it on waking. We called it "Warner" among ourselves.

And then one morning, whilst shaving, I glanced fondly through the window towards it, and saw something that made my blood run cold. The railway line runs along the end of the garden, and a man was climbing the fence. He was in corduroys, and apparently a platelayer by profession. He was also one of the very biggest men that I have ever seen. He was making straight for that Plum . . .

In such moments a man seems to live very long, and has the power of noticing trivial things. I remember that a blackbird was trilling in the garden. I am almost certain that it was a blackbird. Anyway, it was trilling. And my nose informed me that there was bacon for breakfast.

These things came back to me afterwards. At the time I was conscious only of that platelayer. He strode up to the Plum, and stooping down appeared to pick it. But in a moment I saw that he had only tried its softness between his great finger and thumb. And he was not satisfied with its ripeness. I saw him shake his head moodily and turn away. I stood as one paralysed until he disappeared.

But as soon as I could huddle on some clothes I rushed down to the Plum. It was still there; but some-



"HOW'S THAT"—FOR CRICKET COSTUME?

"THE LATEST NOVELTY IN CRICKET TOURS IS A TEAM OF FIJIAN PLAYERS, WHO PROPOSE VISITING AUSTRALIA DURING THE COMING WINTER. . . . THEY WILL BE LED BY RATU KADARU, THE REIGNING CHIEF OF FIJI. . . . THE FIJIAN PLAYERS WILL NOT PLAY IN CONVENTIONAL CRICKET ATTIRE."—*Daily Mail*.

thing of its fresh virginal glory had departed, never, as I feared, to return. Its youthful bloom seemed to have been brushed rudely off, and I even fancied that I could trace the mark of that coarse, sacrilegious thumb. These things could not make it less dear to me, but—breakfast was almost a mockery upon that day.

I scarcely knew what to do for the best. If I picked that Plum before it was fully ripe it would be a partial victory for the platelayer. The matter had come already to be a personal contest between us. And I had set my heart upon the Plum attaining to perfection upon the tree.

But I knew, I knew that the platelayer would return, and it was not to be thought of that the last and greatest triumph should be his.

There was, of course, the police. But I felt that they could not help me here. This problem was too vivid and subtle for their large-booted wits. No, it must be fought out between myself and the platelayer. When I say "fought out" I do not

wish it to be thought that I contemplated physical violence. I am, thank God, a law-abiding Englishman. Besides, the creature was twice my size and weight, and probably in perfect condition. No, I meant that I would watch and scheme, and match my keener intellect against the grosser material of my foe.

He came again, as I had known that he would come. And at the same hour. I watched him feel the Plum, and shake his head in disappointment as before. It maddened me to see the man nursing, as it were, the Plum to perfection for his own felonious enjoyment. I tapped upon the glass, and shook my drawn razor at him with a gesture that should have petrified him. He saw me, grinned, and plucked a rose before he scaled the fence.

That day, as I remember well, was Wednesday. I calculated that the Plum would reach its prime by Saturday morning at earliest. He would surely come upon that day, this fiendish platelayer. Well, he

should find his passion baulked. I dared run no risks. Upon the Friday evening, and no later, I myself would pluck it.

I write briefly of the rest. The hour came, and through the scented twilight I wandered forth to my glad task. All nature was beautiful around me. It was not even raining at the moment. But—how shall I pen the words?—the Plum was missing!

A faint sound as of smacked lips, expressive of barbarous content, broke the tragic silence. I turned a haggard face to the paling, and for the first time descried a huge, indeterminable figure seated upon it. It raised an arm to throw, and some missile struck me. Then the figure disappeared.

I was alone with the night and a plum-stone.

"The girl who is alleged to have abdusted a child from the care of its guardian at Chester, has been arrested in London. The child was with her at the time."—*Evening News*.

We are glad to learn, from the last sentence, that at any rate you can't be abdusted from a distance.

AS EVERYBODY LIKES IT.

THE revival of *As You Like It* at His Majesty's was a fresh triumph for the scene-painter, Mr. JOSEPH HARKER. It was a case, as the old catalogues have it, of "Landscape with Figures." One knew beforehand what the figures were going to say, and could guess pretty shrewdly how they were going to say it. The best proof of their quality lay in the fact that neither by assertiveness nor other indiscretion did they disturb the charm of their background. For the rest, the text was admirably selected, and the inevitable banality of the plot was made as unobtrusive as might be.

The chief burden of the acting fell upon Miss LILY BRAYTON as *Rosalind*, and she carried it with superb vivacity. It was a pleasant relief to see her in a part in which she had not to take herself too seriously, but could give the well-known frown a rest. I don't know whether it is the effect of his experience of melodramatic methods, but I found Mr. HENRY AINLEY as *Orlando* not quite in the Shakspearian picture. He spoke many of his words like a rapid recitation. Of the other characters, all relatively minor, the *Old Adam* of Mr. ALFRED BRYDONE was quite the best detached performance. I could have wished that the *First Lord* (Department of Woods and Forests) had had more to say; for Mr. FISHER WHITE, who had got himself up after the similitude of Mr. BERNARD SHAW, delivered his one speech about the wounded deer with extraordinary felicity of manner, appearing to think it out as he went along.

As *Jaques*, Mr. OSCAR ASCHE achieved the same effect in a more difficult part, being hampered by the greater familiarity of his words. In throwing off "All the world's a stage" he had to seek the assistance of an apple, which he munched between the ages. He pointed his humour as if the matter of it were a fresh thing to his audience; and he was certainly justified of this assumption by the spontaneous laughter of certain sections of the house. Mr. COURTICE POUNDS, on the other hand, in his pleasant reading of *Touchstone*, did not insist much on the clown's humour, but seemed to take the recognition of it for granted. As for the *Audrey* of Miss MARIANNE CALDWELL, it was irresistible. You might know all her few words by heart, and yet be helplessly at the mercy of her face and voice and gesture. She did not

simply interpret; she positively illuminated the text.

Finally, I must mention Mr. TRIPP EDGAR's performance as *Le Beau*, the sort of part that is often overdone. Mr. EDGAR made a charming and gallant courtier, without the pedantry of his kind. Altogether, and not forgetting the fascinating costumes and the delightful singing of *Touchstone* and *Amiens* (Mr. ERNEST GROOM) and the two anonymous pages, the play was very much *As Everybody Likes It*. O. S.



1. AS CHARLES LIKED IT.



2. AS ORLANDO LIKED IT.

Charles . . . Mr. Herbert H. Herbert.
Orlando . . . Mr. Henry Ainley.

A sporting correspondent sends me the following note on the play:—

"Mind you, parts of it are excellent—I like the girls and the scenery; they're all right. But I jib at the wrestling. Give me a fair contest, and down with all put-up jobs, I say. And the wrestling in this play is a put-up job every time. *Orlando* must win, as every student of SHAKSPEARE knows, or it would spoil the whole show. I know appearances are all against him until the very last. Indeed, a friend who went with me to see the play at His Majesty's the other night offered me five to one on *Charles*, and meant it; but knowing he was not a student of SHAKSPEARE I didn't think it friendly to take him on. He said afterwards that he never thought a great writer like SHAKSPEARE would

have played such a low trick. Yet he admitted that he might have known there was something crooked about it from the way *Charles* left *Orlando*'s hair alone, when there it was all the time *asking* to be caught hold of. And I must say here that a man who takes on a catch-as-catch-can wrestle with hair of that length doesn't deserve to win.

There is no doubt that SHAKSPEARE's plays might be made far more attractive to the sporting public if the wrestling, duelling, quarter-staff-bouts, and the rest were *bond-fide* contests. Any insurance office would cover the risk of injury or death, and the vacancies would give more openings for resting members of the profession. SHAKSPEARE, being dead, can't, of course, do anything; but if OSCAR ASCHE couldn't adapt the play while he is shaving one morning so as to allow a genuine wrestle he is not the man I took him for. You see, all that has to be done is to write a few extra lines to be used in case the wrong man wins.

For instance, supposing *Orlando* is downed by *Charles*. Let him lie on his elbow and groan a bit, and then talk like this:

Fortune has played me false. My luck is out. See how my foot slid on the greasy turf! Ha! thou may'st smile, fat Charles; but if thou 'lt say
That thou wilt come to claps with me again,
Then I will throw thee till thy bullet head,
Piercing the earth, shall dig thee half thy grave.

Then *Charles* should smile a bit more, and say:

Come, little playmate, let me toy with thee
Yet once again, and I will break thy neck.
Thy foot did slip, but yonder is a spot
Dry as my throat! Come, thither let us go.

Well, let them go off, with the bogus *Duke*, the girls, and the whole house-party, leaving *Touchstone* behind. You remember the scene in *Strongheart*, in which a football match 'off' is described. Well, let *Touchstone* do something like that. Let him skip up on the wall, where he can see better, and just tell the audience, to slow music, all about the great struggle, while *Orlando* and *Charles* are smoking a quiet cigarette together in the wings. Of course, he would make out that *Orlando* had finished *Charles* up absolutely, and then the play could go on as SHAKSPEARE wrote it. Do you catch the idea?

Now if OSCAR ASCHE would only take my tip, he could send a paragraph round to the papers saying that *As You Like It* had been brightened up with new business, and it would go like a Derby winner."



Colonel Shekarry (to fair neighbour.) "THERE I LAY HELPLESS, THE BEAST COMING AT ME, TAIL WAVING, EYES BURNING, WHITE TEETH VIOLENTLY DISPLAYED—"
Charlie Lightly. "AWFUL, THAT KIND OF NIGHTMARE, ISN'T IT, COLONEL? I'M SOMETIMES TROUBLED THAT WAY MYSELF."

PIGRAMS WITH TEARS.

MRS. RYLEY was in a daring mood when she wrote *The Sugar Bowl*. She crammed it full of epigrams, although she must have known that an epigram was a very dangerous thing. It is dangerous because there are no half-measures about it: it is either a brilliant success or a hopeless failure. You cannot pass it off as an accident. It is like a boomerang, which (as I am told), on missing the other man, comes back and hits you. When I hear an epigram in a theatre I say either "Ha, ha," or "Oh lord." At the Queen's I mostly said "Oh lord." Once, indeed, when *Lady Andover* had three shots at being funny, and then said "Seriously though," I nearly cried.

While I was keeping back my tears on this side the footlights, on the other side no such restraint was shown. When I used to write unpublished stories, and found myself (as often happened) at a loss for something to say, I would make my heroine burst into a flood of tears. After that one could begin again in a new place. But I always regarded the flood of tears business as a convention, to be used at need in masculine fiction, but not to be expected in real life. Now comes Mrs. RYLEY, who should know her

own sex, to say that I builded better than I knew; that women do indeed do this thing. Well, it may be so, but it is possible to overdo real life in the theatre. As it was, I was in an agony of apprehension whenever *Miss Pemberton* was on the stage.

Miss ELLIS JEFFREYS looked as delightful as ever, and did what she could with the part of *Grace Pemberton*. When I last saw her (at the Haymarket) she had to say, "Because—I—ask you" to some inquisitive man; this time she has to say, "Because—you—are you." Some people have all the luck.

Mr. FRED KERR wore a wonderful pair of evening socks in the first Act. He wore a similar pair in the third Act, four weeks later, and I spent the rest of the evening trying to work out whether they really would be back from the wash then, or whether he had another pair just like them. I forgot what result I arrived at, and it doesn't matter. Nothing in *The Sugar Bowl* matters very much. M.

A REAL MIMI.

The feature of the week at Covent Garden was the performance of Signora GIACCHETTI in *La Bohème*. It was her first appearance in England in the part of *Mimi*, and nobody who did not know that she won an early reputation elsewhere in this part

would have guessed that the greatest of our operatic tragédiennes could have so wonderfully adapted herself to the ingenuous gaiety of the first two Acts. There was the same fine intelligence, the same conscientious regard for detail which have grown familiar to us in her interpretation of *Madama Butterfly* and *La Tosca*. It was a revelation to those who had heard none but Madame MELBA in this part, and had therefore never seen *Mimi* really *acted*. The death-scene, for the pathos of which, as far as *Mimi* is concerned, we have always had to rely upon our own imaginations, made for once a true appeal from the very heart of tragedy.

Signor BASSI's voice rose to the occasion, and he seemed to take quite an interest in some of the other characters—though not to the extent of wearing clothes in keeping with his environment. His frock-coat must have been far too expensive for the starving fraternity to which he belonged. Signor DE LUCA, as *Marcello*, was much nearer to the type. Mlle. DEREYNE was a very probable *Musetta*, and did her fair share in the brilliant *ensemble* of the Second Act. As *Schaunard*, SIGNOR NIOLA, who is lacking in fertility of resource, seemed a little outclassed in this Bohemian society, from which we sadly missed the masterly rotundity of M. GILIBERT.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

MR. MAARTEN MAARTENS avowedly writes his last novel, *The New Religion* (METHUEN) for those who are sick, those who believe they are sick, those who want to live longer than other people, "and for nobody else." Yes, there is somebody else. He is the doctor. It is part of Mr. MAARTENS' fun that the title of his book is deliberately misleading. Members of the congregation at the City Temple, opening it in eager anticipation of finding vindication of, or attack upon, their beloved Pastor, will find themselves mocked. The new religion dealt with exclusively concerns the *malade, imaginaire* or otherwise. He provides Mr. MAARTENS with opportunity of running amok at the profession of medicine. The experience of most people reveals in its ranks the presence of men of generous habit, not insensible to the attraction of a fat fee, but ready painstakingly to do their duty in cases where they know the fee will not be forthcoming. With the occasional exception of actors, doctors are the only skilled practitioners who are ready to give their services for nothing. Mr. MAARTENS finds in them a clique of arrant impostors, for the most part jubilantly conscious of their infirmity. Probably when he sat down to his work he thought he had a story to tell, or, failing actual possession, that it would dawn upon him as he proceeded. So he prattles on from chapter to chapter, getting but little "forrader." Nevertheless, the chatter is pleasant, and several of the characters are finely drawn, especially the severed husband and wife, who recross each other's path at intervals, and converse as if there had been no tragedy in their married life.

Miss J. L. HERBERTSON has written a book so tempestuous that on shutting it up I half fancied that the nice gilt windmills, which Mr. HEINEMANN stamps on the cover, were going round and round. *Mortal Man* is the story of a fierce spendthrift passion that defies the social conventions, and all for a mistake. *Jessica Costello* gives herself to *Philip Rean* without the ceremony of marriage, because, loving him, and seeing how he wrestles with his passion for her, she concludes that he is bound to another woman. In reality it was the doubt as to whether their love would last that held him back. And so there is a shadow between them. The tumult of emotions in the young school-teacher is powerfully if rather incoherently portrayed; and the writer has boldly forsaken precedent in giving *Philip* an almost grotesquely uncouth personality. All this happens down in Cornwall, where the wildness of the elements so often becomes interfused (in novels) with the human passions, and where characters, affected by the neighbouring conditions of Wessex, may be said to live the *Hardy* (as opposed to the simple) life. In the end *Philip* dies, and *Jessica*, after losing her child, marries a more honest man, who has been waiting all along. I am not quite sure how far Miss HERBERTSON intends to justify her heroine. Is she excused *quia multum amabat*? The death of the child and the introduction of *Matthew Rapley* seem to shelve the old unhappy problem once more.

I am afraid that most readers will find *Bohemia in London* (CHAPMAN AND HALL) a trifle tame. The author, Mr. ARTHUR RANSOME, wishes to set at rest any doubt that London really has a Bohemia apart from the Savage Club and similar circles, just as Paris had, before dollaried Americans began to regard it as the thing to sojourn there. That wish gives promise of a rather enticing companionship, and one embarks hopefully, pleased with Mr. RANSOME's quite engaging way of putting things. But gradually one realises that the place which he is clothing with an attractive garb of anecdote is, after all, quite familiar. One knows, if one considers a moment, that there are studios in Chelsea properly equipped with artists' models, and that people frequently spend their shillings in Soho restaurants and their coppers at coffee-stalls. And that is about all Mr. RANSOME's Bohemia amounts to. There is, to be sure, a vague population of hungry young men who dream over sunsets, and find sustenance in visions of the past and the future, but personally I don't find that their part in the scheme imposes itself on my credulity. I suspect there are not enough of them in London to make much of a show among the others who, without prejudice to their genius, would rather have a pork-pie than ten sunsets.



THE RESTORED VENUS OF MILO.

THE PROBLEM SOLVED AT LAST.

Sylvia Lovell was a nice little English girl who lived in the Isle of Wight with her early-Victorian mamma. If she had realized that she was niece and heiress to the President of an American railroad, *The Privateers* (METHUEN) would never have been written. But she did not (it's a wise niece that knows her own uncle—in sensational fiction), and *Alston Fordyce*, American hustler and millionaire, did. He came and saw and got engaged to her in a fortnight. Another two days and she would have been his wife, when, gee-whiz, enter *Wilson Rudgwick*, American millionaire number two, and kidnaps her in his yacht. This is where *Lieutenant Kerslake, R.N.*, comes in. He is as ignorant as *Sylvia*

of the real issue, but for motives of his own joins *Fordyce* in the bewildering game of fox-and-hounds which follows. Sometimes the hounds hunt the fox, sometimes the fox the hounds, and sometimes they all sit down and pow-wow together, as friendly as you please. Once on board the lugger and the girl is mine, thinks *Fordyce*. He gets there, and the girl is his for the time, till a turn of Fortune's wheel, assisted by American cuteness, lowers the proud, and *Rudgwick* comes out on top, and so on, *da capo*. Through it all the honest British officer is the only one who always plays cricket, and proves to be cuter than the cute. The others play poker, and poker is chiefly bluff. Mr. H. B. MARRIOTT WATSON's story of the three-cornered duel is often wildly impossible, but it is always exhilarating.

Our Feuilleton.

[NOTE.—*You can begin this to-day.*]

Ch. CXXXVIII.

"The words echoed through a little silence: then Meredith's down dropped arms, the fists clenched, his bowed face seemed to say some thing, nothing else."—*The Morning Leader*.

(To be continued from some other paper.)